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ABSTRACT

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF LANGUAGE TO LEARNING, PARTICULARLY AS IT AFFECTS "AVOIDANCE BEHAVIORS" OF REMEDIAL READERS IN THE CLASSROOM, STRONGLY EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF GREATER STRESS ON ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT. NEW CONCERN FOR COGNITIVE AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN CHILDREN STRESSES THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE AS AN INTERACTION MEDIUM BETWEEN PEOPLE AND CALLS FOR THE PROMOTION OF CURRICULA BROAD ENOUGH TO ENCOMPASS A VARIETY OF DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES--BOTH COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INTELLIGENCE AND CREATIVITY WAS NOTED IN EMPHASIZING THE NEED TO DEVELOP THE LATTER. SPECIAL AWARENESS OF THE DIFFERENCE OF WESTERN MAN'S CULTURAL AND LINGUAL STRUCTURING OF LIFE EXPERIENCES IN A LINEAL, PHONETIC LITERACY AND OF HUME'S ACCEPTANCE OF LIFE CONSCIOUSNESS AS NONSEQUENTIAL WILL LEAD EDUCATORS, IT WAS ARGUED, TO DEVELOP IN THEIR STUDENTS WESTERN MAN'S ADVANTAGE OF ORAL, OBJECTIVE, BUT LESS-INVOLVED ACTION AS A REACTION TO STIMULI WITHOUT SUBJECTING YOUNGSTERS TO A MERE "LINEAR TYRANNY OF DECODING AND ENCODING THE WRITTEN WORD." ACADEMIC REORIENTATION WHICH WAS RECOMMENDED AND OUTLINED FOR REMEDIAL READERS STRESSED THE NECESSITY OF POSITIVELY ALTERING THEIR "AVOIDANCE BEHAVIORS" BEFORE EFFECTIVE SKILL REMEDIATION COULD BEGIN. A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF CURRENT, RELATED LITERATURE IS INCLUDED. (BT)

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LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

Introduction

The past decade has witnessed a great surge in concern, interest, research, and hypotheses about the structure, function, and learning patterns of language. Linguists have analyzed, categorized, and described it (Smith, 1966); psychologists have studied its developmental patterns (Thompson, 1962); educators have experimented with most effective ways of teaching it. As part of the total import of a language-oriented culture, social analysts such as McLuhan have interpreted and hypothesized in relation to the dramatic changes today's technological world has brought in the transmission of language.

Reading specialists and teachers are constrained to great concern about all branches of language. They are fully aware that reading is but one facet of the total communication skills of listen-

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ing, speaking, and writing, emanating from individual cognitive and emotional qualities which are interacting with life experiences of the person. Linguists have clearly shown that the spoken word is the true language and that its written form is an attempt to convey all of the meanings of verbal expression. Much thought, effort, and expense have been given to the improvement of language skills in disadvantaged children and youth. (Corbin & Crosby, 1965.)

In light of such current concern, reading teachers might well ask these vital questions?

1. What developmental factors need to be considered in analysis of the acquisition of satisfactory language skills?

2. In light of the genesis of language in children, how can preschool experiences help enrich language experience as communication of thoughts, feelings, and ideas?

3. Is there a particular learning theory that undergirds the achieving of language competency?

4. What assessment instruments and principles have been tested and used for measurement of components of language as communication?

5. What techniques may be developed in classrooms to help children learn to use language as effective communication?

6. How can improved skills in oral language lead the individual to greater skill, appreciation, and utilization in the area of reading?

The Central Problem

Since all factors of language as communication cannot be discussed, the rationale for selectivity is here presented.

It is tempting to linger in the area of developmental psycholinguistics. The slender volume, The Genesis of Language (Smith, 1966) presents a number of interesting hypotheses from the linguist's point of view. The product of a conference entitled "Language Development in Children", in 1965, it is the first publication to bring together formal aspects plus practical implications of powerful modern concepts of linguistic theory as related to acquisition of children's language. (Smith, 1966).

Perhaps most provocative is David McNeill's reiteration of Chomsky's and Katz's belief that children in learning to speak are guided by the possession of an innate sense of a universal hierarchy of categories which they use as a Language Acquisition Device(LAD) and through which children process the Primary Linguistic Data they receive from their environment into grammatical competence. The book also includes Weir's presentations on the child's learning of phonology, Templin's studies in articulation and language development during early school years, as well as Premark and Schwartz's provocative planning for teaching a new language of communication to a chimpanzee.

One could not include a remark about "innate" ability to grammatically categorize, without inclusion of ideas from another type of current book. Arthur Staats' work, Learning, Language, and Cognition (Staats, 1968) is typical of the experimental psychologist's viewpoint that language is the product only of social conditioning and reinforcement without a given innate sense of selectivity of syntactic elements of speaking. Reverberations from the current

feud of linguists and experimental psychologists will probably be discernible for some time to come!

With the decision to exclude descriptions of how children learn language as the central thrust of this discussion (without derogating its general importance), it seems wise to view other challenges.

As director of the University of Southern California reading centers, it is the author's concern and responsibility to do some analytic thinking about boys who attend the full-time school for boys with extreme reading disabilities. What are some typical strands of importance to communication running through the attitudes of this diverse group representing all socio-economic levels? Not poor visual discrimination - though it is present; not poor auditory discrimination- though there is much. Certainly not poor cognitive functioning, since such screening for normalcy and above is done for admittance to the school.

Standing out above other commonalities which these boys possess are two:

(1) Inability or unwillingness to take responsibility for their own learning processes;

(2) Being caught in a type of "emotional web" which seeks to make the fact of failure less apparent to themselves and others.

These two thoughts embody the framework for the present discussion. The central thrust of the paper then is twofold:

(1) How can oral communication be used to help the child think of himself as a unique learner constantly thinking, striving and

attaining and becoming?

(2) How can oral communication be used to help the child disentangle himself from the restrictive behavior which he has chosen to protect himself from painful awareness of failure?

One Hypothesis for the Setting of the Problem

Since the selected problem must be worked out in the present technological age, it seems appropriate to view one current spokesman's opinion of causes of types of human reactions in this concern.

Marshall McLuhan believes that part of our current maladies spring from the fact that we are schizophrenically torn between needs springing from the milieu of multi-media experience and the great reverence and status of a linear, logical, sequential order of information and knowledge represented by the printed page.

He says in part (McLuhan, 1964), "The achievements of the Western world, it is obvious, are testimony to the tremendous values of literacy. But many people are also disposed to object that we have purchased our structure of specialist technology and values at too high a price. Certainly the lineal structuring of rational life by phonetic literacy has involved us in an interlocking set of consistencies that are striking enough to justify a much more extensive inquiry than that of the present chapter. Perhaps there are better approaches along quite different lines; for example, consciousness is regarded as the mark of a rational being, yet there is nothing lineal or sequential about the total field of awareness that exists in any moment of consciousness. Consciousness is not a verbal process. Yet during all our centuries of phonetic literacy we have favored the chain of inference as the mark of logic and reason. Chinese writing, in contrast,

invests each ideogram with a total intuition of being and reason that allows only a small role to visual sequence as a mark of mental effort and organization. In Western literate society it is still plausible and acceptable to say that something "follows" from something, as if there were some cause at work that makes such a sequence. It was David Hume who, in the eighteenth century, demonstrated that there is no causality indicated in any sequence, natural or logical. The sequential is merely additive, not causative. 'Hume's argument,' said Immanuel Kant, 'awoke me from my dogmatic slumber.' Neither Hume nor Kant, however, detected the hidden cause of our Western bias toward sequence as "logic" in the all-pervasive technology of the alphabet. Today in the electric age we feel as free to invent nonlineal logics as we do to make non-Euclidean geometries. Even the assembly line, as the method of analytic sequence for mechanizing every kind of making and production, is nowadays yielding to new forms.

"Only alphabetic cultures have ever mastered connected lineal sequences as pervasive forms of psychic and social organization. The breaking up of every kind of experience into uniform units in order to produce faster action and change of form (applied knowledge) has been the secret of Western power over man and nature alike...

"Civilication is built on literacy because literacy is a uniform processing of a culture by a visual sense extended in space and time by the alphabet. In tribal cultures, experience is arranged by a dominant auditory sense-life that represses visual values. The auditory sense, unlike the cool and neutral eye, is hyper-esthetic and delicate and all-inclusive. Oral cultures act and react at the same time. Phonetic culture endows men with the means of repressing their feelings

and emotions when engaged in action. To act without reacting, without involvement, is the peculiar advantage of Western literate man.

"To sum up, pictographic and hieroglyphic writing as used in Babylonian, Mayan and Chinese cultures represents an extension of the visual sense for storing and expediting access to human experience. All of these forms give pictorial expression to oral meanings. As such, they approximate the animated cartoon and are extremely unwieldy, requiring many signs for the infinity of data and operations of social action. In contrast, the phonetic alphabet, by a few letters only, was able to encompass all languages. Such an achievement, however, involved the separation of both signs and sounds from their semantic and dramatic meanings. No other system of writing had accomplished this feat.

"The same separation of sight and sound and meaning that is peculiar to the phonetic alphabet also extends to its social and psychological effects. Literate man undergoes much separation of his imaginative, emotional, and sense life, as Rousseau (and later the Romantic poets and philosophers) proclaimed long ago. Today the mere mention of D.H. Lawrence will serve to recall the twentieth-century efforts made to by-pass literate man in order to recover human "wholeness." If Western literate man undergoes much dissociation of inner sensibility from his use of the alphabet, he also wins his personal freedom to dissociate himself from clan and family."

McLuhan reminds us that today's Johnnie is a totally new creature, starting school with effects of a multitude of media surrounding him since birth. He has been the recipient of huge constellations of sights and sounds. He is standing with one foot on the ferryboat, the

other on the dock - his destination or destiny out there in the fog. We cannot go with him - but we can send tools and weapons with him. How will his tools be forged and ready?

The Conceptual Framework for a Solution

Since the two major problems deal with communication of emotions on the one hand and communication of ideas on the other, it is well to set our thinking into some existing conceptual frameworks.

Erikson's framework for developmental stages of emotional growth and Piaget's framework for developmental stages of cognitive growth have been so chosen. Figure 1, Page 9, shows their relationship in yearly sequences.

It is important to have this framework in mind. This paper largely expresses an opinion consistent with the psychologist D.O. Hebb, whose work gives insight into the great importance of early stimuli (Hebb, 1958). Through his experimentation with animals he, as well as other psychologists, has discovered that if baby animals are deprived of certain stimuli at the time they need them, their development may be very delayed or permanently altered. Though such hypotheses are only tentative, teachers may need to assess children's learning power, finding some so crippled that they may have to be led to some truly supportive lower-level goals in order to build a foundation for the skills and attitudes of the present stage expectations.

Trust and Sensori-Motor Accomplishments

Smart and Smart in their recent book on Children: Development and Relationships (Smart and Smart, 1967), elaborate on Erikson's hypothesis that trust is the foundation of adequate emotional and

Age	Erikson's Stages of Personality Development		Piaget's Stages of Intellectual Development
-			Reflexes
	Trust		Primary Circular
1			reactions
-	Autonomy	Sensorimotor	Secondary Circular
2			reactions
-			Means-end behavior
3			Tertiary circular
-	Initiative		reactions.
4	&		Mental cobinations
-	Imagination		Preconceptual
5		Preoperational	
-			
6			Intuitive
-			
7			
-			
8			
-			
9	Industry	Concrete operations	
-			
10			
-			
11			
-			
12			
-			
13			
-			
14			
-		Formal operations	
15	Identity		
-			
16			
-			
17			
-			
18			
-			
19			
-			
20			
-			
21	Intimacy		
-			
22			
-	Generativity		
23			
-			
24	Integrity		
-			
25			

Figure 1. Schematic representation of Erikson's stages of personality development, with titles of Piaget's stages of intellectual development placed at appropriate ages.

and social development. The period, roughly speaking, of the establishment of trust is during the first year. Concurrently the child is establishing cognitive strength through various perceptual experiences in the Piaget-described sensori-motor stage, lasting about the first eighteen months or two years of life.

The authors remind us that..."Successful growth during the first year results in a well-established sense of trust. Begun with the first experience of securing food and skin stimulation, the growth of trust continues through experiences with things, other people and the self. The good feelings from tension reduction, repeated consistently in good physical care, make the baby confident that he will be fed when hungry, dried when wet, rocked when restless and stimulated when bored. He is confident also that he can do something toward initiating these satisfying experiences.

"People, largely mother, are part of the good-feeling experiences and come to stand for the whole. Thus the four-month baby, crying from hunger, stops crying and even smiles when he sees his mother or hears her footsteps, trusting that she will feed him."

"Appreciation of the permanence of objects is a basic ingredient of the sense of trust. Through his interactions with the world during his first year and a half, the baby comes to know that things exist even when he is not perceiving them. As will be described in greater detail later in the chapter, the first 18 months is the sensorimotor period, in Piaget's series of stages. The two essential achievements of this period are a realization of the permanence of objects and organization and control of his movements in space. These two achievements go along together. As the baby controls the movements

of his body, he deals with the objects of the world, seeing and feeling them, noticing them appearing and disappearing, understanding that events can take place when he is not watching. He comes to trust the world to have certain kinds of order in it, to be dependable. He also comes to know his own powers and how to use them, a beginning of the sense of autonomy."

"Establishing trust also involves learning that mother (and others) exists even when she cannot be seen and that she will come again and again. The game of peek-a-boo dramatizes mother's disappearance and reappearance. In playing it, the infant lives and relives the frightening situation which has a happy ending, enjoying it throughout the months when trust is growing. As he learns that mother continues to exist apart from him, he also learns that he exists apart from her. His sense of self begins perhaps from this knowledge and certainly grows as he explores his own body. Fingering his hand and watching it move yield one complex of sensations; fingering the blanket gives another. Reaching, grasping, securing, releasing, touching, mouthing -- all tell him what is himself, what are other things and what he can do, or what he can trust his body to do with the world. As a good feeling goes along with the accumulation of knowledge of his body, his power, the objects outside himself, and other people, then the sense of trust grows. Mistrust arises from discomfort, disappointment, anxiety, inability to explore, discriminate and cope with the world." (Smart and Smart, 1967)

Language Implications

Language combines with other forms of communication to be an integral part of the infant's sense of trust and his knowledge of him-

self and the world about him. A mother who verbalizes her feelings while bestowing loving care on her child gives him a growth-promoting language milieu. Each act of care is accompanied by speech. Labels for the world are given to help the child's sensory experience of the world and himself take on reality.

As objects and his own body parts become labeled the child's ability to think about them is greatly enhanced. O.H. Mowrer (Mowrer, 1958), theorizes that phonation becomes associated with mother and with sensations of comfort and stimulation which she provides. When the baby hears himself make a sound like mother's, he feels happy. Thus he stimulates himself to make noises like mother makes. "Words are reproduced if and only if they are made to sound good in the context of affectionate care and attention."

A number of recent experiments by Irwin, Lewis and Rheingold corroborate the hypothesis that more parent vocalization and oral reading by parents produced more production of communication sounds by the infants.

Coping with Frustration

As frustrations appear, related to excessive delay or lack in fulfilling the child's needs, patterns of behavior develop as means of coping. Underlying many variations of behavior, the two basic strands of approach are withdrawal and attack - fear or aggression. In infancy the beginnings of language centering in fear are frightened crying and excessive withdrawal of affect. Aggressive behavior centers in screams, tantrums, rages. Both strands have strong implications for later language behavior.

Autonomy, Initiative, and Pre-Operational Thinking

During early pre-school years the child is striving for autonomy. At about four through seven years his sense of initiative is heightened. Concurrently, in his cognitive processes, he has mastered many sensori-motor skills and has entered what Piaget terms pre-operational thinking.

Dominant characteristics of pre-school thinking are (1) egocentrician of thought; (2) the dominance of present perception in thought processes; (3) reasoning from the particular to the particular; (4) lack of socialization in thinking.

Mental awareness depends on the interrelationship of thinking, language, and imagination. In fact, Vygotsky's research has promoted the theory that thought depends on the inner speech of children. Language provides symbols for thinking. It also provides tools for social interaction. Thinking in its first stages is dominated by the perceptual experiences of the moment. Language helps children expand ideas of the reality relationships of classes, time, space, number, and causality, moving from the particular to the abstract.

Both language and concepts develop through verbal interactions with people. Problem solving is aided by verbal symbols. By checking and rechecking his accuracy, the child achieves socialized thoughts, concepts of his culture and progress toward adult structure in language. By the time he is four he has normally internalized the cultures's basic syntactical language patterns.

Imagination is an important part of children's emotional life. As children in fantasy talk to others and themselves, they express emotion - a complement to controlled thought. Fantasy is both inner language and, on occasion, outer language. It is dreams and artistic expressions. As

Smart and Smart perceptively say, "Although fantasy is not limited by reality and does not purposefully deal with reality, it sometimes achieves solutions to problems which controlled thought cannot solve. An adult may 'sleep on' his problems and awakes with the solution. A child may work through his problems in dramatic play or with dolls. The role of controlled thought is widely appreciated in children's education and development, but fantasy is little understood." (Smart and Smart, 1967).

Imaginative language also helps as character is formed. As the child acts as a doer, he gets some guilt reactions for wishing to oppose his parents. Through imagination and its consequent language, the child appeases and allays some of the conflict between the part which desires to move out independently and that which controls him from moving. Wise parents can help children know limits by verbalizing. Thus as Unger declares, the dual role of the parent in combining nurturing and punishing functions is aided through language. The child's response to wrong doing is both at a verbal and feeling level - "I shouldn't have done that" triggering a feeling of fear or anxiety which will serve as basic controls in moral decisions in the future. (Unger, 1963)

Industry and Concrete Operations

Industry is the term Erikson has chosen to designate the stage of personality development of the school child. This is the time for task accomplishment rather than purely task initiation. The child has explored many possibilities for action; now he wishes to learn how to do things well. He becomes highly motivated to achieve in the technology

of his culture. Specialists help take over such learning processes - whether they be academic, recreational, or social.

The school becomes the main acculturation agency for the stages of industry and concrete operation of children. Their curiosity has prepared for a stepping up of the cognitive processes. The preoperational child had differed from the infant by operating on a wholly new plane of reality, the plane of representation as opposed to direct action. The child who is functioning at the concrete operational level has at his command, even though it is still representational, a coherent and integrated cognitive system with which he organizes and manipulates the world around him. The structure is dependable yet flexible. Thus the child behaves in a wide variety of tasks as though a rich and assimilating organization were functioning in balance with a finely tuned, discriminative, accommodatory system. Language is the tool by which these operations are logically expressed. The system of thinking is moving toward the formal operations stages of the adolescent in which the thought of the possible in contrast to the real will become prevalent.

Since Piaget's stages are flexibly demarcated, various children will be in various phases of these cycles at the same chronological age. Children who have developmentally failed to reach stages of concrete operations at school age will be reacting to self-made and other comparisons with peers. Those whose initiative level is developmentally lagging will be revealed as children with high dependency needs. Language of such children will reflect these needs. The challenge to schools is to promote curricula broad enough to encompass a variety of developmental stages - both cognitive and affective.

School Curricula to Foster Critical and Creative Oral Language Implications

The young child develops an awareness of himself as a person in many ways. As he has normally used dramatic play as a learning activity, he tries the roles of many people he knows and is learning about. His use of language allows him to develop thoughts and feelings about such roles and to test their reality by his consuming questions, peaking at ages four and five.

He is fortunate if he has been given opportunity for making suitable choices, and for living with their consequences. His experiments with language illustrated so ably in individual case study form by Ruth H. Weir (Smith, 1966) can become highly functional extensions of himself as a person if he is given freedom for such creativity. In media of art, music, and dance, he also should have opportunity to learn what he can do with his spontaneously developed forms as well as become acquainted with forms of others.

The child has natural tendencies to be creative. Some homes foster such creativity; many do not. Television often crushes this spontaneity by turning the child into a continuous spectator. Our schools have a responsibility for fostering creativity. In far too many instances, the schools have yielded to the pressures of academicians and alarmed parents that children ought to read, write, and compute long before they do. Somehow oral language is rarely mentioned in such alarms.

Anyone familiar with children's development, thinking processes, learning principles and linguistics findings will realize that we are in many instances moving backwards. Before the child has had an opportunity for the help of skilled teachers to capitalize on the child's

oral language capacities for developing his concepts of the world and of himself, he is placed in the linear tyranny of decoding and encoding the written word. Such feable attempts as "sharing" have become so stereotyped, geared mainly to the highly verbal child, descriptive rather than thought-producing, that they serve very little real purpose. It is indeed vital that opportunities for meaningful oral language be opened continuously by the planning of concerned, flexible teachers.

During the past decade, much interest and research has been done in the field of creativity. Guilford's conceptual schemaof intelligence being composed of many facets in a 5x6x4 or 120 cell grid of combinations of operations, products and contents, has opened new vistas of "divergent thinking" (Guilford, 1959). Getzels and Jackson, Torrance, Bruner and others have explored dimensions of creativity. Flanders in his studies of classroom interactions has shown that teachers of children who learned less used a pattern of direct influence more often than an indirect approach (Flanders, 1965) He says, "An indirect approach stimulates verbal participation by students and discloses to the teacher, students' perception of the situation." Piaget is quoted as saying (Duckworth, 1964), "The principal goal of education is to create men who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done - men who are creative, inventive, and discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds which can be critical, can verify, and not accept everything they are offered."

How can schools meet these challenges?

Assessment

Probably the most complete recent study of creativity in the classroom, particularly contrasting it with intelligence, is the study by

Wallach and Kogan, Modes of Thinking in Young Children (Wallach, 1965). By developing a very interesting battery of tests for creativity their carefully developed study shows creativity as specially distinct from intelligence.

The first battery of tests all required verbal replies of elementary children. They were composed of five games:

(1) Instances: Four items, encompassing all the things that children could name that (a) are round; (b) will make a noise; (c) are square; (d) move on wheels.

(2) Alternate Uses: Eight items, encompassing all the ways a child would use a (a) newspaper; (b) knive; (c) tire; (d) cork; (e) shoe; (f) button; (g) key; (h) chair.

(3) Similarities: Ten items, encompassing all ways in which these items are alike: (a) potato and carrot; (b) cat and mouse; (c) train and tractor; (d) milk and meat; (e) grocery store and restaurant; (f) violin and piano; (g) radio and telephone; (h) watch and typewriter; (i) curtain and rug; (j) desk and table.

(4) Pattern Meanings - in which children were to generate interpretations for each of eight abstract visual designs.

(5) Line Meanings - in which children were to generate interpretations for nine continuous line drawings.

The second battery involved a rating by two raters who spent two weeks in each classroom. Nine dimensions of behavior on a nine-point scale were recorded.

The behaviors were: (1) seeking attention in unsocialized ways; (2) hesitation to express opinions; (3) showing of confidence and assur-

ance; (4) companionship sought by peers; (5) seeks companionship of peers; (6) self-deprecation of work and self; (7) inhibited by classroom; (8) attention span and concentration; (9) interest in academic work.

The classroom behaviors were analyzed in relation to the children's intelligence and creativity. Interestingly enough, boys who were creative produced few behavioral consequences, while girls high in creativity but low in intelligence had the most difficulty in classroom adjustment.

The assessments and interpretations dealing with conceptual styles included object sorting, thematic integration (telling stories with 5 sets of four stimulus words as cores).

The areas of sensitivity to physiogonomic properties included: (1) free descriptions of stick figures; (2) free descriptions of paths (on the line drawings previously described); (3) emotive connotations of abstract drawings.

All of these tests open vistas of assessment to classroom teachers.

Instructional Implications

The challenge is clear. Children who do well in school have adequate and clear positive concepts of themselves and are not thereby shortcircuiting their natural drive to move forward in instruction. Children who lack such a self-concept are more often classified as failures. Oral language which truly expresses the thinking and feeling of children is an extremely important part of their picture of themselves, particularly in the school setting.

The message of probably the most exciting pair of recent books in

the field of reading brings saliency to this discussion. Russell Stauffer's companion books on Directing Reading Maturity as a Cognitive Process and Teaching Reading as a Thinking Process (1969) make a strong, and much needed, case for twin thrusts in reading instruction; individualization of the skill areas as much as possible; promotion of critical and creative thinking through small groups reading and discussing the same instructional material. His directed-reading-thinking-activity plan casts a new glow to old grouping, and challenges teachers to capitalize on the fact that children can think, act purposefully, make judgments, generalizations, and can become emotionally involved through using the interaction of their experiences with the message of the written material. In this type of reading group the old bugabear of round-robin reading will be destroyed once and for all. This is the natural place for group discussion. The reading material supplies the impetus. The teacher is the catalyst. At the readiness level there are excellent suggestions for the use of pictures to promote oral interpretations. Yes, we do need more oral language in the classroom. Stauffer has brought new aids in planning for it.

School Curricula to Help Children Face Their School-Avoidance Behavior

Implications

Children who are not ready to enter the initiative industry and concrete operation stages soon feel the effects of teacher, parent, and society pressures. Since no one enjoys a feeling of failure, children, like many adults, adopt a coping behavior that will help themselves and others forget the failure. Lazarus shows that as the organism

recognizes danger, an emotional response pattern ensues. The volume on Psychological Stress (Appley, 1967), emphasizes the fact that, as in infancy, fear and anger are the two basic patterns of somatic response to the stress of failure. In turn, these patterns may move in upon the self or out to others. Such patterns impede the learner even more than the original conditions - so that the learning problem becomes progressively more complex.

Assessment

Many children have evolved such severely emotionally explosive and anti-social behavior patterns emanating from inability to succeed that, of course, psycho-therapy is indicated. Shortage of such therepists and financial limitations narrow severely the number of children so helped. It is a major thesis of this paper that it is possible for the classroom teacher to prepare to work toward helping such children.

An example of a psychological assessment that tries to measure the amount and direction of aggressive responses in children is the children's form of the Rosenzwaig Picture-Frustration Test (Anderson, 1959). This test requires the child to supply verbalization of cartoon-like characters in a frustrating situation. Since comments are written, it represents expressive communication functions of children's feelings. Would it not be refreshing for teams of school psychologists and classroom teachers to band together to construct a similar instrument that might be group-administered by teachers and interpreted by psychologists?

There are a number of scales for measuring children's anxiety levels, including those by Taylor and by Sarason (Wellach-Kogan, 1965).

Wallach-Kogan include a chapter on "Anxiety and Defensiveness" and present some excellent inventories to indicate anxiety, test anxiety, defensiveness and a set of 5 incomplete stories in which the main character is a child under stress of failure. These forms also are highly pertinent to teachers who wish to try to understand emotional forces at work in the lives of her pupils.

Of crisis importance is the necessity first to develop better screening procedures and administrative arrangements for children entering school. With modern knowledge of individual differences, it is heinous to continue expecting the same performance of children of the same chronological age at school beginning. Children who are high risks for failure must be screened, and supplied with a planned program of instruction which will be applicable to their needs.

For those children who have presently not had such screening and for those who will inadvertantly "slip by", there are some constructive suggestions available.

Instructional Implications

With the opportunity to observe and work with many cases of avoidance behavior stemming from school failure, the author in collaboration with Dr. James Gardner, has worked out a system of counseling designated as "academic reorientation". Applicable for classroom teachers and described in the March 1969 issue of The Reading Teacher, it is based on a double premise: (1) that remedial students manifest more avoidance behaviors in the school setting than do non-remedial students; (2) that the pattern of such behaviors can and must be positively altered before effective skill remediation can begin. The techniques

of the plan are being successfully used for the fourth year at the NCL-USC Reading Center Day School in Los Angeles.

Briefly, there are several features in the process which go on repetitively and simultaneously.

(1) Providing S with an adequate rationale for his learning problem

(2) Providing social reinforcement of S for positive statements about school

(3) Helping S learn basic discriminations about his own behavior

(4) Teaching S the aversive consequences involved in the continued use of avoidance patterns

(5) Developing alternate modes of responding

(6) Labeling the feelings

(7) Positive regard of the counselor for pupil, with an expectancy that he can succeed

This arrangement is used with groups of four or five boys in twenty-minute sessions each week. It is followed by a teacher seminar, for interpretation and planning for instructional and self-directing goals of the children for the following week.

Why not a group of concerned teachers in a school who would endeavor to pool resources so that such techniques might be tried with some cases not reached with any other supportive help?

Conclusion

It is clear that language is the most important tool of modern man. As our world is increasingly operated by sophisticated technology, language will continue to be the embodiment of thinking processes.

How little actual aid are we giving children in the expressive use of language as their own ideas, thoughts, feelings! Only as they know their own thoughts can they move to understand that of others.

The Task Force (Corbin, 1965) set out to evaluate Language Programs for the Disadvantaged for the National Council of the Teachers of English had as one of their prime recommendations that oral language receives greater stress at all levels of education. They also recommend that primary children be allowed to speak spontaneously in their own dialects, with standard English being formally introduced only at intermediate levels.

We have many additions to our knowledge of language acquisition from linguists, psychologists and sociologists. Can we develop an adequate pedagogical framework to encompass and embody that which we know? The wills of thousands of teachers and school districts are involved. Let us hope that such resolves may bring to fruition some positive planning for meaningful oral language in both cognitive and emotional fields in a learning theory setting that has been tested and found valuable.

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